a chance of getting changed. The districts, therefore, must be asked not to meddle with the subjects sent by us.

SUBJECT No. 95.

Responsible Government and Constitutional Reforms.

Messrs. C. Vasudeva Rao, Chikmagalur Taluk; Hosakoppa Krishna Rao, Koppa Taluk; S. R. Balakrishna Rao, Shimoga Taluk; H. Shama Rao, Honnali Municipality; H. Krishna Sastry, Krishnarajpete Taluk; C. Narasimhaya, Heggaddevanakote Taluk; N. Rajagopalaiyngar, the Bar Association, Mysore, and S. Krishnaswami Rao, Mysore Taluk.

Mr. H. Krishna Sastry.—Responsible Government has, to some extent, been introduced for the whole of British India. Our State being surrounded by British territories, the subjects of the State will be influenced by democratic ideals. I put an interpellation in this Assembly some time back on this subject. I pray that early steps should be taken to introduce Responsible Government in the Mysore State. All around the State they are discussing about this subject and naturally we are also influenced by it. Our beloved sovereign, His Highness the Maharaja, intends, we have no doubt, to grant us an increasing share in the administration of the country. I need not enlarge now on the exact manner in which Responsible Government is to be granted. But I may say that, as a first measure, resolutions on the budget should be permitted in this Assembly and in the Legislative Council. Responsible Government has no existence in the absence of this privilege. The main principle is that the Government must be carried on in accordance with the wishes of the people as a whole. Then the question arises: Will His Highness have any power left to him at all? Well, it is too well known that unless a bill receives His Highness' gracious consent, it cannot become law; His Highness is the fountain of all authority. In general terms, therefore, no resolution need be valid without His Highness' approval. This is what we mean by Responsible Government. We do not ask for an introduction here *in toto*, of the reforms introduced in neighbouring provinces of British India. They will have to be adapted to our own particular conditions. My main prayer is that a non-offical committee may be formed to submit a scheme recommending the desirable reforms to be introduced in the State on the lines of the reforms in force in British India.

The member then described briefly the various steps taken in British India, in connection with the recent reforms and added:—Government, indeed, is a trust and while making our request we do not fail to bear this in mind. Consistent with our status and ability, the request may be granted. If, Sir, the representation is reasonable in your opinion, then we pray that this may be submitted to His Highness for gracious consideration together with such recommendation as you may be pleased to make. If permitted we are prepared to submit suitable proposals.

You will also observe, Sir, that in Chapter X of the Montagu-Chelmsford Scheme they have said that they must not forget the possibility of the subjects of Native States who form one-fourth of the

total population of India asking for similar reforms, should these be introduced in British India itself. This serves as an evidence to show that this is but a legitimate ambition on the part of Indian States. And three years ago, Sir M. Visvesvaraya said "The future prosperity of the States is closely bound up with the manner in which the common interests of the Empire are administered and it is of the highest importance to them to secure an adequate voice to safeguard their interests in the new constitution." With these few remarks, Sir, I pray that the question may receive the sympathetic consideration it deserves and that we may be permitted to submit our proposals on the subject.

Mr. Vasudeva Rao.—At one of the meetings of the Legislative Council you were pleased to say some very significant words which embolden us to take part in the discussion on this subject:—

> "In connection with the discussions on the budget it was inevitable that some of the members should refer to the question of a larger participation of the people in the responsibilities of Government. I need hardly say that the progress of constitutional reforms in British India is being closely followed by His Highness' Government and I may say that the inauguration of measures of constitutional reforms on lines adapted to our requirements and conditions is a matter which will receive our earnest attention."

I only beg to bring these lines to your kind notice.

Mr. K. T. Seshaiya.—Sir, last year this subject was disallowed, but it has been allowed this year. We are therefore thankful to the Government for having given us scope for discussing this all-important question. I do not expect that our representation will be sanctioned to-day, and that members here will be Ministers to-morrow. Before I submit my views on the subject, however, I wish to make a reference to what some of my friends in this Assembly have said. Because some of us discussed the merits of the order on the Miller Committee Report, we have been called disloyal. Now, 'disloyal' is the most abusive term that I know of. We did not object to the expression then and there, hoping that the President would do the needful. But unfortunately the remark was not noticed by the chair. If discussing an order of Government involves disloyalty, asking for constitutional reforms may be styled as something much worse. I wish to make myself clear, therefore, before submitting my views on the subject on hand, that it is not my idea in the least degree that His Highness' exalted position should in any way be affected.

On the other hand, I regard His Highness, as every one else does, as God on earth and firmly hold that he is above all law and above all constitution, and he is the divine head of all things. But I would differentiate between Government and His Highness. Whereas Government is bound by rules, His Highness is not, so that when I ask for changes in the Governmental methods, I must not be understood as referring to His Highness.

History provides ample instances to prove that without Responsible Government progress is impossible. In the neighbouring British provinces this exists. It is a necessity in Mysore also if Government should be efficient.

Third Member of Council.—May I know what your conception of Responsible Government is?

Mr. K. T Seshaiya.—My idea of Responsible Government is, in the first place, that subject to any percentage that may be fixed, the resolutions passed by this Assembly must be binding on the Executive, subject of course to the veto of His Highness the Maharaja. We do not ask that we must be given control over all Government departments now. In the beginning we may do what the British Government have done in the matter and control over a few departments alone given. A committee may be appointed for the purpose of taking evidences in all parts of the State, and the needful may be done next. What we want immediately is that the principle must be accepted.

Mr. Karnick Krishnamurthi Rao.—The previous speakers have practically exhausted the subject. I only beg to add that the principle has already been accepted by His Highness' Government when organizing taluk and district conferences with a view to enable the people taking a keener interest in Governmental matters. As kindly permitted last year by you I have submitted a draft scheme and it may be considered early and needful done, if found practicable, before the Conferences are next held. Suitable reforms will however have to be introduced.

Mr. C. Narasimhaiya.—Though I have not much to say on this important subject of constitutional reforms the Third Member's question as to what our view of responsible Government is, prompts me to say a few words. We must notice the difference that exists between the relationship of the people to Government in British India and the relationship of the subjects to His Highness in Mysore. The Responsible Government which we want here is not what those in British India are given. Here the Members of Council discuss important matters, which, if necessary, pass through the Legislative Council and the Representative Assembly, and then receive the gracious sanction of

His Highness. But the power to veto is vested in him and we have not a word to say against it But with a view to ensure efficiency of administration it is well that people are given better facilities for the expression of their own free opinions. The source of opinion is only one now, that is, the Council. If the reforms are granted, His Highness will have before him a variety of views and all sides of a question will thus be presented before a decision is arrived at. In these circumstances the request deserves sympathetic consideration. I will confine my remarks to the State Executive Council, the Representative Assembly and the Legislative Council. In regard to the first we pray that a non-official member may be appointed to represent the people's view. Some more powers should be conferred on the Representative Assembly, that is, it must be empowered to vote upon questions like taxation. In the initial stage of any proposed legislation it must first come before the Representative Assembly and if a prescribed majority are agreeable, then it must be referred to the Legislative Council. Should it be referred to a Select Committee, the proposed legislation must again come to the Assembly after the Select Committee stage and only then be promulgated into law.

Also, just as local bodies have power to pass resolutions on matters concerning them, the Representative Assembly too may have similar powers. And when a prescribed majority passes any resolution it must be binding on the Council.

The relationship between the Representative Assembly and the Legislative Council should be settled, *i.e.*, Government must consider whether the two bodies should deliberate jointly or separately as at present. The Assembly is purely a non-official body so that discussion here and in the Legislative Council are two different things. And whenever an important measure is to be passed the opinions of Government and the non-official members of the representative bodies, respectively, must be ascertained and submitted to His Highness for orders.

These, in short, are the changes that I would pray for under 'constitutional reforms.'

Mr. M. Venkatakrishnaiya.—The seed of Responsible Government was sown in this State on the 25th March 1881 when the Order of His Highness the late Maharaja issued, expressing a desire to establish a representative assembly of the people whose opinion in governmental matters as a whole was necessary. This Assembly has been the political school of the people in Mysore. When Sir M. Visvesvaraya witnessed the discussions in this

Assembly for the first time, he remarked that some members of the Assembly were equal to the best Parliamentary debaters and he thought that members as a whole were very intelligent here. Forty or fifty years ago our people had no desire to take any interest, for instance, on matters relating to the public, but education has done much to create in us fresh ideas. The seed of Responsible Government, thus, was laid more than forty years ago and we are closely following that headline ever since. What does Responsible Government mean? Well, the people have difficulties of their own and in order that their life, property and honour may be protected, they pay Government, part of their earning as *kandayam*. His Highness, as Mr. Seshaiya said, is our God and you are his representatives. Our responsibility is to pay *kandayam* and your responsibility is to spend it in the best manner possible, to ensure the prosperity of the State. So that under a scheme of Responsible Government, we submit our wants to you and you protect our interests. This mutual service is what constitutes Responsible Government. Several eminent men under the Government of India, have expressed themselves on this subject and politicians have discussed the several schemes that went up to Government; and to whatever extent these can be adopted to our State, consistently with our conditions, you may recommend their adoption at an early date, and earn the lasting gratitude of the people.

Mr. Karnic Krishnamurthi Rao.—I beg to add only a word to the previous speaker's remarks that Responsible Government is that under which we have the power to spend the tax that we pay.

Mr. B. N. Vijaya Deva.—I beg leave to observe that this is the most important subject ever discussed in this Assembly during the past two years. The Orders on the Miller Committee, the question of Women's Franchise and the proposed levy of the education cess, elicited much debate, but this subject outstrips all others in importance. The one conclusion that this fact enables us to draw is, that we are progressing at a rapid rate. My friends in the Legislative Council have urged similar prayers and you have been pleased to say, in reply.

"In connection with the discussions on the budget, it was inevitable that some of the members should refer to the question of a larger participation of the people in the responsibilities of Government..... and I may say that the inauguration of measures of constitutional reforms .....will receive our earnest attention."

But we must not be overhasty. In British India, the working of these reforms are being carefully watched and

how far they are workable and useful there, will have to be seen before we do anything in this State. There is no doubt that these reforms have been introduced with the best of intentions and to promote India's greatest interests. But our Government is a good Government and in order that it must continue to be so, it is worth its while to first see the actual working of the reforms in British India and then introduce the changes here. In regard to the fact that when they are granted in the neighbouring British provinces, it will be our natural aspiration to ask for similar reforms, there is not the least doubt, but Government, in my opinion, would be well advised in waiting for some time and we would also do well not to press the matter just at present.

Mr. Hutchveere Gowda.—I beg your kind permission to submit that we are more concerned with matters like rainfall and seasonal conditions than with constitutional reforms which we do not require just for the present. I would request my friends to patiently wait till the Akshaya year is over. Important questions such as Responsible Government would be more timely then than now. At present we must confine ourselves to submitting to Government our various grievances and the present famine conditions. This was intended essentially as an Assembly of raiyats and not an Assembly of lawyers.

Dewan.—But forty years have brought about some change.

Mr. Hutchveere Gowda.—True, Sir. But for the present, we shall rest content with what has been given us.

Mr. Abbas Khan.—The subject on hand is of grave importance and it is worth the while of our Government to appoint a Committee to report on the extent to which the reforms introduced in British India may be adopted here and in what ways the privileges already conferred on us may be improved.

Dewan.—We will consider the matter.

Mr. T. Narasinga Rao.—If a continuity of policy is to be ensured, democratic form of Government is essential. With each Dewan come many changes and if, for instance, the order on the Miller Committee Report should have permanent effect, Responsible Government is necessary.

Dewan.—Policies must of necessity change with time.

Mr. C. Rasul Khan.—We are not competent to dicuss this subject. Government themselves must consider and do the needful.

Vide.—Dewan's concluding remarks in Appendix G.